



September 29, 2014

Alan I. Leshner
Chief Executive Officer and
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Barbara Cargill, Chair
Thomas Ratliff, Vice Chair
Texas State Board of Education
William B. Travis Building
1701 N. Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Chairwoman Cargill and Vice Chairman Ratliff:

On behalf of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the world's largest general scientific society, I am writing to express concern about the treatment of climate change in certain social studies textbooks up for approval this year by the Texas State Board of Education. Issues with the books are laid out in a report by the National Center for Science Education (<http://ncse.com/files/Texas-social-studies-report-2014.pdf>).

There are not “two sides to the story” of climate science. The truth is that there is virtually no scientific controversy among the overwhelming majority of researchers on the core facts of climate change. Observations throughout the world make it clear that climate change is occurring, and rigorous scientific research demonstrates that the greenhouse gases emitted by human activities are the primary driver. These conclusions are based on multiple independent lines of evidence. Moreover, there is strong evidence that ongoing climate change will have broad impacts on society, including the global economy and on the environment. Asserting that there are significant scientific controversies about the overall nature of these concepts when there are none will only confuse students, not enlighten them.

We urge the Board to only approve textbooks with a strong and accurate presentation of the state of climate science. To truly benefit the students of Texas, textbooks and curricula must present the best peer-reviewed research. Only in this way will students gain the strong understanding necessary to compete for high-skill jobs in an increasingly high-tech world economy.

For more information, please visit the AAAS website What We Know (whatweknow.aaas.org). AAAS has a longstanding expertise in science and science education, and we stand ready to work with you.

Sincerely,

Alan I. Leshner, CEO